

Good afternoon. A SALAMA LAKE-UM.

I'm Major General Ken Hunzeker, the Commanding General of the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team, more commonly known as CPATT. Before assuming command of CPATT in October 2006, I had heard many of the same stories about the state of the Iraqi police that have discouraged many people throughout the world:

- Some would say “The Iraqi police are hopelessly corrupt;”
- Others claimed, “The Iraqi police are ineffective and won't fight to protect Iraqis;” or, most commonly,
- “The Iraqi police are hopelessly sectarian and brutal.”

Four months into my command, I've come to realize that these warnings were more an overstatement than reality. Although there are still challenges to be overcome in the training and equipping of the Iraqi Police Service, National Police, and Department of Border Enforcement, there are also tens of thousands of people in the Ministry of Interior

and Iraqi police who are courageous, well-trained, and committed to defending all of Iraq's citizens.

In order to appreciate how far the Iraqi police have come in the short time since Iraq's liberation, it is important to consider what our starting point was back in 2003. Before the war, many assumed that because Iraq was literally a police state, that the police under Saddam were professional and efficient, and merely serving under bad political leadership. Instead, we found that Iraqi police had no concept of active patrolling or community policing, but rather sat in the police station waiting for victims to come to the station to report a crime. A bribe was typically required in order for an investigation to be launched. In fact, bribes were required to gain a job as a police officer, and one of the most lucrative jobs in Saddam's Iraq was to be a traffic cop with the ability to arbitrarily pull over motorists and invent fineable offenses.

Even in the rare instances when an investigation was initiated, the other elements necessary for the rule of law – courts and prisons – were hopelessly corrupted.

Today's Iraqi police force is well on its way to being the polar opposite of its predecessor.

Today, Iraqi police are well-trained. We have trained more than *200,000* policemen and women, more than *19,000* above our target goal. Iraqi Police are trained at the Baghdad Police College, at Jordan's International Police Training Center, and at Iraq's Police Service academies. Last Tuesday, I visited the Numaniyah National Police Transition Training Academy with the National Police Commanding General, MG Hussein. Together we watched one of his brigades going through the last week of a four week training cycle. We watched three battalions conducting simultaneous operations in an urban setting, an exercise similar to the training American brigades go through at the U.S.-run Combined Readiness Centers. This kind of professional training was almost unthinkable just four years ago. On 15 February, this brigade will again be part of the Baghdad Security Plan after 4 weeks of training.

Today, Iraqi police are committed. In 2004, we all looked on in dismay as Iraqi police abandoned their posts to angry mobs in cities throughout Iraq. Now Iraqi policemen frequently will work four-day-shifts, sleeping in any corner of the station they can find. – Whether it’s a local policeman in Mosul, a National Policeman in Baghdad, or a Border command at one of the 400 plus border forts - **They are on the Job – for example;** In Ramadi, on February 3rd, members from the Albu Obaid Iraq Police station discovered one of the largest weapons caches in the last year while conducting dismounted patrols.

“The Coalition and ISF have discovered many weapons caches over the last six months, but none of this magnitude,” said Army Col. Sean MacFarland, commander of the 1st BCT, 1st Armored Division.

And finally, **today’s Iraqi police are heroic.** You have heard the Minister of Interior talk about the more than 12,000 Iraqi police have been killed or injured in the line of duty since 2003. Many of these officers have been lost

while preventing suicide bombers from killing large numbers of Iraqis in marketplaces or mosques. Despite being a consistent target of terrorist attack, we typically see ten volunteers for every job vacancy within the Iraqi police.

For example – according to Col. David W. Sutherland, 3rd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division commander, reported on 6 February, “Al Qaeda happened to be targeting more civilians in the Khalis area, attempting to disrupt their desire for freedom and independence. The Iraq Police attempted to stop the attack and were protecting the rule of law when the VBIED exploded – they are committed to their people.”

There are still significant obstacles for the Iraqi Police as they work to combat the unacceptably high levels of violence plaguing their nation. There are problems of leadership -- we face the challenge of finding and developing mid-level leaders. There are problems of logistics: the provinces do not have systems in place to support picking up their own equipment. The Iraqi police

also face problems with sustaining their equipment given their current high tempo of operations.

To address these issues, 2007 will be the year of Leadership and Logistics. We will be training mid- and senior-level management within the MOI, and helping to put in place an Iraqi logistics and sustainment system.

We also have three initiatives on going to improve Police operations in Iraq. We have what I call National Police Transformation – which is conducted at Numaniah – Four weeks Individual and Collective training for all National Police Brigades. Three Brigades have completed the training already. We also have an Iraqi Police Station assessment on going in Baghdad. We and a MOI lead team have inspected 9 out of 54 stations with the number 10 going today. All going well! And finally we have an initiative to improve operations at our Ports of Entry. This is really a partnership with our Department of Homeland Security and the MOI's Department of Border Enforcement.

As Major General Caldwell noted earlier, “We win when the Iraqi people win.” One way to help the Iraqi people is to give them the tools to solve their nation’s problems. We have done that with the police. Perhaps no tool is more important to a burgeoning democracy than a well-trained police force capable of establishing the rule of law in Iraq, and of protecting the Iraqi people.

Everyday I see tens of thousands of committed and courageous, brave Iraqis willing to sacrifice to make their country . . . their communities . . . and their families more secure.

Given how far the Iraqi police force has come over the past four years, I believe that with time, Iraq will be able to overcome the twin scourges of terrorism and sectarian violence.

Thank you, I look forward to your questions.